

tools of the trade

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Planning Evaluations

Workbook for Conducting Program Evaluation by County and State Extension Staff. Barbara Froke. North Central Regional Extension Publication #114. Brookings: South Dakota State University, 1980. 26 pp. 75¢ for single copies, 50¢ each for multiple copies. Available from: South Dakota State University, Extension Publications, University Station, Brookings, South Dakota 57007.

If you've ever felt unsure about just how to plan for program evaluation or all the questions that need to be considered, this workbook can help you find some answers. Froke outlines 12 steps to follow, with questions and issues to reflect on and make decisions about at each step. The workbook provides a tool to use in actually planning a specific evaluation effort.

The charts and checklists distributed through the publication will help raise your level of awareness about the "who, what, why, and how" decisions that must be made to narrow the focus of your evaluation effort.

This workbook is a good teaching and planning tool. It's not a resource book to answer all your questions about evaluation designs, sampling, or related topics.

The author suggests that the workbook can be most useful in workshop instruction, with minilectures or discussions at intervals throughout the day. An agenda for a workshop is provided at the end of the publication. The author's correct in stating that a staff member who's unfamiliar with evaluation must be taught to use the workbook. Also, the individual helper or workshop leader must carefully select content to supplement the workbook.

Because the workbook is global in its approach, it's a challenge to select enough content to provide good background and understanding without overwhelming the staff member or exceeding the time limits suggested in the one-day workshop plan.

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